

**Iowa Lakes RC&D  
Board Meeting Minutes  
April 3rd, 2008  
1:00 p.m.  
(712) 262-2083**

**Present**

Chair - Dan Heissel – Clay County  
Curt Smith – Dickinson County  
Linda Swanson – Clay County  
Dr. Mark Schultz – O’Brien County  
Steve Pitt – Palo Alto County  
Bob Ness – Emmet County  
Tammy McKeever – Clay County  
Keith Edwards – DC Lyon County  
Tim Hibma \_ Osceola County  
Jerry Crew – Clay County  
Bill Graettinger – Emmet County

Keith Wirtz – Palo Alto County  
Nick Fank – Palo Alto County  
Rich Haack – O’Brien County  
Charlene Elyea – O’Brien County  
Bob Anderson - Buena Vista County  
Jeff Kestel – Coordinator  
Alana Heying – Accountant  
Sheriffa Jones – Architectural Historian

Meeting called to order by Dan Heissel, chair at 1:00 p.m.

Agenda was approved with no additions or corrections. Motion to approve agenda was made by Steve Pitt. It was seconded by Curt Smith. MCU

Minutes – Dan asked for any corrections or additions to minutes of previous meeting. No additions or corrections were made. There was a motion to approve minutes by Jerry Crew. The motion was seconded by Bill Graettinger. MCU

**Treasurer’s Report**

The treasurer’s report was given by Alana Heying and Mark Schulz. Mark and Alana explained some changes that have been made to the format of the treasures report. This will make it easier for the board to see how RC&D finances are being used and items that are providing income. Bill Graettinger made a motion to approve the treasurer’s report and it was seconded by Bob Ness. MCU

**Next Meeting Date**

Next meeting will be **June 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM.**

**Agenda**

Comment was made by Mark Schulz that it would be nice to have new board member orientation guide. The board made a recommendation that Jeff do this for the board.

1. Project Updates Sheriffa & Jeff (see projects continued below)
2. Request to subscribe to Newspaper Archive.Com  
Sheriffa made a request to the board to subscribe to Newspaper Archive.Com to assist in doing research for her consulting projects and National Register Nominations. This could save many trips to libraries and court houses searching for historical information. Curt made

a motion to spend \$98 to subscribe to the Archive service. The motion was seconded by Bill Graettinger. MCU.

Projects Continued: (Sheriffa)

- a. Completed Renewable Energy Grant for Gary Hoefling to do a geothermal system for his new manufacturing building in NW Spencer.
  - b. National Register projects: Spencer Middle School did receive tax credits worth about \$3 million which Sheriffa will be working on along with the national register nomination. Sheriffa has been hired for \$3,000 to do a nomination for an old hospital building which is now used as a senior living in Le Mars. Sheriffa is also working with at state program called the Technical Assistance Network (TAN) through the State Historic Preservation Office. Through this program the state pays for a consultant (Sheriffa) to come to the site to work with potential projects to help get them up to speed. Mini-Wakan State Park is one of Sheriffa's TAN projects. She is also doing a TAN project for Buffalo Center which involves three buildings. Other TAN projects are with Hartley for a cemetery chapel and also a church in Albert City.
  - c. Grants: Grants for County reconnaissance surveys from County Foundations have been approved for Clay County (\$5,000) and Palo Alto County (\$9,300). Volunteers from each of these counties will be used to help complete these projects.
  - d. Still using some funds from the SHPO SOS grant to help with Sheriffa's general program expenses.
  - e. Sheriffa is also still working on Jim Frederick's water quality project assessment. It is due to be completed early summer.
  - f. Sheriffa told the board that Brittney Jepsen will be volunteering for her this summer starting in May. She is a freshman in college at Simpson in PR and marketing. She will be signed up as an Earth Team volunteer. Brittney is Anissa's daughter.
  - g. Sheriffa will be doing an Earth Day presentation at Gull Point State park taking about historical preservation.
  - h. She will be doing a presentation May 3rd at ISU College of Design West on how to research building.
  - i. Sheriffa explained that she is doing an architectural scavenger hunt in Spencer in May also. This will entail taking pictures of architectural significant items throughout Spencer and submitting them to the RC&D office. She has arranged for prizes as well.
3. Hy Vee Pharmacy bags advertizing promotion  
Jeff explained to the board that this might be a possibility for promoting the RC&D and our specific projects. These bags will be used by Hy-Vee pharmacy throughout the year. Our message would be printed on all 24,000 bags. After some discussion the board decided that they were not interested in participating.
4. Sheriffa's increase in salary  
Dan explained to the board that the RC&D Executive board had met to discuss increasing Sheriffa's salary since she has made considerable strides towards bringing in funding to cover her wages through various projects and consulting work. Dan said that the executive board had approved raising her salary to \$15 per hour with an allowance for medical insurance, paid holidays and vacation time. This increase would be retroactive back to March 31<sup>st</sup>. A motion was made by Steve Pitt to go along with the decision of the executive board. The Motion was seconded by Bob Ness. MCU

5. Requests for assistance

a. Mike Rezac – Waste Timber Utilization project. Jeff explained that he had helped Mike in the past with a similar project. Mike is requesting that the board approve a request for assistance from Jeff to submit a Solid Waste Alternative Grant to Iowa DNR to help him expand his current sawmill at Maple Hill in Emmet County. The grant/loan request will be for \$151,350 with a total project cost of \$445,892. The project makes use of waste wood such as very large cottonwood trees for pallet wood and similar products. A motion was made by Curt Smith to approve the project request. The motion was seconded by Bill Graettinger.

b. Artisans Road Trip – Funds Administration

c. Northwest Iowa Center for Photography – Grant Administration

A motion was made by Mark Schulz for items b and c to provide financial administration with a 5% fee for funding run through the RC&D accounting system and that this fee charge can be reviewed at anytime. The motion was seconded by Rich Haack. MCU

6. Update on planning for Iowa League of RC&Ds meeting being hosted by Iowa Lakes RC&D.

Jeff talked to the board about a tentative agenda for the League meeting which will be held Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> at Kings Point Resort in Storm Lake. The emphasis will be on urban conservation. Speakers confirmed so far are Steve Anderson Urban Conservationist located in Dickinson County, Wayne Peterson the new State Urban Conservationist working for Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Gary Lalone Storm Lake Chamber and Economic Dev. Director and Bill Northey Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. It was also suggested that Dick Bennett who has a Leather shop in Rembrandt and is starting a vineyard would be another good possibility.

7. Draft Iowa League Executive Director Job Description

At a previous meeting the Iowa Lakes RC&D board agreed to contribute \$1,000 toward an Iowa League of RC&Ds executive director position. Jeff told the board that he has received a job description and will email it out to all board members for them to review and comment on. There was some discussion about if other RC&Ds were contributing and if they were how were they making money. Mark Schulz commented that one RC&D received a donation of a farm. There was some discussion as to whether Jerry would donate his farm to the RC&D if we promised to use organic no till. Jeff will email out the executive director job description to all board members to review.

8. IBBIA contract increased and renewed with Iowa lakes RC&D

The new contract is for \$4,500 per year. We provide day-to-day management and receive calls from their 800 phone number. Anissa Jepsen manages this project.

9. Results from RC&D review by NRCS State and Area Office

Jeff explained that the review went well. Thanks to Dan for coming in and talking with Marty about Iowa Lakes RC&D program. All areas of the RC&D program were talked about and project files were reviewed as well as Area and Annual plans.

10. New Project Ideas

Dan reminded Jeff that a Cooperative Weed Management project is something that has been talked about and needs to be initiated. Jeff will work with Dan to come up with a steering committee to get things started.

**Miscellaneous Items:**

The board received a request from the Emmet County Conservation Board asking for a contribution to their nature center project. After some discussion it was decided that the RC&D is not in a position to contribute to these types of requests since we are also a non profit organization that works on community, philanthropic, natural resource and business development projects that we carry out on a regular basis. The board encouraged Jeff to send a letter back to the Emmet County Conservation Board explaining our situation and our policy on making contributions to other benevolent organizations.

There was also some discussion regarding renewal of CDs. After the discussion it was recommended that we ask Alana to check with other banks in town to see where the best return might be and to renew CDs where appropriate. It appears that a short-term CD would be best deal at this time. A motion was made by Curt to have Alana renew CDs at the best rate she can find in Spencer. The motion was seconded by Bob Anderson. MCU

Jerry asked about a couple project items that were left off the agenda which were on the draft agenda sent out. One project was that Dick Schultz a Forestry Professor from ISU along with one grad student and one undergraduate student were coming on Fri. the 4<sup>th</sup> to visit Gordon Garrison and talk about his Beaver project for site specific watershed control. Jeff also told the board that we had a booth at the O'Brien County Ag Expo. There seemed to be a pretty good crowd at the expo with quite a bit of good discussion. Jeff and Jerry also attended a presentation at Iowa Lakes Community College in Emmetsburg on the BMP Challenge which in a nutshell provides a safety net for producers to try conservation/no till tillage and nutrient management practices. The program was sponsored by the Palo Alto SWCD. Jerry also explained that there is another no till incentive program for producers within a six county radius of Poet Ethanol plant at Emmetsburg. Producers can apply at their local SWCDs for these incentives. The payment is \$50 per acre upfront for 200 acres if you do no till for three years. The idea is that it provides enough upfront money for a producer to make serious machinery changes to switch to no till.

Bill Graettinger mentioned that there is a premium being paid by a processor in Estherville for range fed hogs with much of the meat going to CA. Tim Hibma commented that he works with the Diamond Ranch on a similar program. Tim's hogs are being slaughtered in Sioux Center.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Secretary Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_ Bill Graettinger